

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
February 4 - 10, 2011

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1. [President Obama's Statement on Egypt](#) (02-10-2011)

The Egyptian people have been told that there was a transition of authority, but it is not yet clear that this transition is immediate, meaningful or sufficient. Too many Egyptians remain unconvinced that the government is serious about a genuine transition to democracy, and it is the responsibility of the government to speak clearly to the Egyptian people and the world. The Egyptian government must put forward a credible, concrete and unequivocal path toward genuine democracy, and they have not yet seized that opportunity.

As we have said from the beginning of this unrest, the future of Egypt will be determined by the Egyptian people. But the United States has also been clear that we stand for a set of core principles. We believe that the universal rights of the Egyptian people must be respected, and their aspirations must be met. We believe that this transition must immediately demonstrate irreversible political change, and a negotiated path to democracy. To that end, we believe that the emergency law should be lifted. We believe that meaningful negotiations with the broad opposition and Egyptian civil society should address the key questions confronting Egypt's future: protecting the fundamental rights of all citizens; revising the Constitution and other laws to demonstrate irreversible change; and jointly developing a clear roadmap to elections that are free and fair.

We therefore urge the Egyptian government to move swiftly to explain the changes that have been made, and to spell out in clear and unambiguous language the step by step process that will lead to democracy and the representative government that the Egyptian people seek. Going forward, it will be essential that the universal rights of the Egyptian people be respected. There must be restraint by all parties. Violence must be forsaken. It is imperative that the government not respond to the aspirations of their people with repression or brutality. The voices of the Egyptian people must be heard.

The Egyptian people have made it clear that there is no going back to the way things were: Egypt has changed, and its future is in the hands of the people. Those who have exercised their right to peaceful assembly represent the greatness of the Egyptian people, and are broadly representative of Egyptian society. We have seen young and old, rich and poor, Muslim and Christian join together, and earn the respect of the world through their non-violent calls for change. In that effort, young people have been at the forefront, and a new generation has emerged. They have made it clear that Egypt must reflect their hopes, fulfill their highest aspirations, and tap their boundless potential. In these difficult times, I know that the Egyptian people will persevere, and they must know that they will continue to have a friend in the United States of America.

[White House, State Department Officials on Situation in Egypt](#) (02-09-2011)

[Clinton: Democratic Change in Middle East a "Strategic Necessity"](#) 02-05-2011)

[Obama Says Violence, Suppression Will Not Resolve Egypt's Unrest](#) (02-04-2011)

2. Terrorism Still Top U.S. Security Threat (02-10-2011)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — The top U.S. intelligence officer says that terrorism remains the greatest threat to the nation, although the primary threat from the al-Qaida terrorist group has been weakened.

"We've apprehended numerous dangerous actors throughout the world and weakened much of al-Qaida's core capabilities, including its operations, training and its propaganda," Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said at a February 10 congressional hearing.

But Clapper also testified that al-Qaida's main objective of attacking the West has not changed, despite the group's operational degradation.

Halting terrorist attacks by al-Qaida and degrading threats from others has required deep engagement with the intelligence and law enforcement agencies of numerous other nations in the years since the attacks on September 11, 2001, Clapper said. His testimony was part of a hearing held by the House of Representatives' Intelligence Committee to review the U.S. intelligence community's annual threat assessment.

"Counterterrorism is central to our overseas operations, notably in Afghanistan," Clapper testified. "And while progress in our efforts to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaida is often hard won, we have seen and we will continue to see success in governance, security and economic development that will erode the willingness of the Afghan people to support the Taliban and their al-Qaida allies."

House Intelligence Chairman Mike Rogers said that in its role of oversight of the nation's intelligence community, the committee recognizes that the intelligence community is vital to helping protect the nation against an array of worldwide threats. "Our job here in Congress is to make sure that our intelligence agencies have the tools and authorities they need," Rogers added.

The U.S. intelligence community includes numerous civilian and military intelligence agencies, such as the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, that are charged with gathering information and carrying out missions to thwart threats and protect the U.S. homeland and American citizens.

In addition to threats posed by terrorism in the United States and across the world, another major concern is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Clapper told the House committee. “The proliferation threat environment is a fluid, borderless arena that reflects the broader global reality of an increasingly free movement of people, goods and information,” he said.

Clapper testified that Iran is a key challenge because of what he described as an unusual confluence of events — an increasingly rigid, autocratic, coercive government that is defiant toward the West while it continues to pursue development of a nuclear weapons capability.

“North Korea’s nuclear weapons and missile programs also pose a serious threat, both regionally and beyond,” Clapper testified.

Clapper said the United States is living in an interconnected, interdependent world where instability among nations can arise and spread quickly beyond borders, as is being witnessed in parts of the Middle East and North Africa — specifically, in Tunisia and in Egypt. It remains a challenge for the U.S. intelligence community to be able to track and report on these types of events, he said.

Other areas of concern for the intelligence community that Clapper cited include cyberthreats, intellectual property thefts, economically generated civil unrest, international organized crime, energy security, drug trafficking and emerging diseases.

3. U.S. Adapts Counterterrorism Efforts to Evolving Threats (02-09-2011)

By MacKenzie C. Babb
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States is continually adapting its “counterterrorism techniques to effectively detect, deter and prevent terrorist acts,” Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano says.

The secretary testified before the U.S. House of Representative’s Homeland Security Committee on February 9.

According to her prepared remarks, she said the terrorist threat facing the United States has evolved significantly in the last 10 years, and that violent extremism no longer is “defined or contained by international borders.”

“Today, we must address threats that are homegrown as well as those that originate abroad,” Napolitano said. Terrorist groups have placed a growing emphasis on recruiting Westerners and inspiring them to launch small-scale attacks.

“This threat of homegrown violent extremism fundamentally changes who is most often in the best position to spot terrorist activity, investigate and respond. More and more, state, local and tribal front-line law enforcement officers are most likely to notice the first signs of terrorist activity,” Napolitano said.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been working for two years to build an enhanced security architecture to address these emerging threats.

Napolitano said the first part of the department's effort is in "working directly with law enforcement and community-based organizations to counter violent extremism at its source," enhancing relationships between law enforcement and members of diverse communities "that broadly and strongly reject violent extremism."

"Second, DHS is focused on getting resources and information out of Washington, D.C., and into the hands of state and local law enforcement in order to provide them with the tools they need to combat the threats their communities face," Napolitano said.

The department's initiatives have included the creation of a new curriculum to guide state and local law enforcement on countering violent extremism; efforts to enhance community-based partnerships through close work with a diverse collection of religious, ethnic and other local organizations; and joint work with international allies that have experience with homegrown terrorism, such as Canada and the United Kingdom.

Napolitano highlighted four key pieces of the new homeland security architecture.

The first is the building of joint terrorism task forces, or "investigative teams that bring agencies together to investigate particular terrorism cases." The task forces are led by the FBI.

The task forces will be enhanced by a network of 72 "state and major urban area fusion centers," which are "analytical and information-sharing entities that bring agencies together to assess local implications of threat information in order to better understand the general threat picture," she said.

Complementing those initiatives is the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative, which "creates a standard process for law enforcement to identify, document, vet and share reports of suspicious incidents or behaviors associated with specific threats of terrorism," which can be used to identify broader trends.

The final part of the architecture is a public awareness campaign called "If You See Something, Say Something," which encourages community-oriented policing to protect communities from crime. Napolitano stressed that "local law enforcement, community groups, citizens and the private sector play as much of a role in homeland security as the federal government."

Her testimony said commercial aviation remains the top target of terrorists, and said DHS recently achieved a major milestone: 100 percent of passengers on flights within or bound for the United States are now being checked against government watch lists.

Napolitano also emphasized the importance of cybersecurity.

"At the same time that we work to strengthen the security of our critical physical infrastructure, we are also working to secure cyberspace — an effort that requires coordination and partnership among the multitude of different entities in both the government and private sector that share responsibility for important cyber infrastructure," Napolitano said.

The secretary said DHS is working with the Defense Department and the National Security Agency to protect against threats to both civilian and military computer systems and networks.

"Working with our federal partners, law enforcement across the country, the private sector and the American public, we are making great progress in addressing today's evolving terrorist threats," Napolitano concluded.

4. U.S., Russia Arms Reduction Begins Next Stage (02-08-2011)

By MacKenzie C. Babb
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov have ratified the New START treaty, an arms reduction agreement that Clinton says “lessens the nuclear dangers facing the Russian and American people and the world.”

The leaders exchanged the instruments of ratification in Munich on February 5.

“Our countries will immediately begin notifying each other of changes in our strategic forces. Within 45 days, we will exchange full data on our weapons and facilities, and 60 days from now we can resume the inspections that allow each side to ‘trust but verify,’” Clinton said in [remarks after the ratification](#).

“Our two countries, led by our two presidents, turned words into action to reach a milestone in our strategic partnership,” Clinton added.

Lavrov emphasized U.S.-Russian cooperation in forming the treaty, and said the agreement “was born of our mutual understanding of the futility of a unilateral approach to security issues.”

The agreement will reduce each nation’s nuclear arsenals to their lowest levels in more than a half-century.

Tom Collina, research director of the Washington-based Arms Control Association, said the treaty “benefits both sides” and “makes sense from every perspective.”

Collina said the treaty has global benefits, including building “a global movement to stop other nations from getting nuclear weapons,” which he said decreases the international threat of nuclear terrorism.

He said the treaty is a significant step in a “multi-year effort of arms reduction that is now free to continue.”

The treaty gives the United States and Russia seven years to reduce forces and remains in force for 10 years from ratification. It contains detailed definitions and counting rules that will help the parties calculate the number of warheads that count under the treaty limits. Additionally, the treaty provides for regular, on-site inspections of each country’s nuclear arsenals to assure compliance and implementation of the immense technical aspects of nuclear arms reduction programs.

The New START agreement succeeds the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and the 2002 Moscow Treaty. It does not block efforts to create missile-defense systems.

The treaty limits the United States and Russia to 1,550 strategic nuclear warheads each, down from the current limit of 2,000 warheads, and 700 launchers. The treaty also requires on-site verification inspections, which had lapsed in December 2009 when the old START treaty expired. Russia and the United States possess 90 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons.

U.S. nuclear forces will continue to be based on its triad of delivery systems: land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and strategic bombers. The treaty provides an upper boundary of 1,550 deployed warheads for each nation and up to 700 deployed ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers. Additionally, the treaty would permit up to 800 deployed and nondeployed missile and submarine launchers or heavy bombers.

[United States and Russia Conclude New START Arms Cut Pact](#) (02-05-2011)

[Remarks by Clinton, Russia's Lavrov at New START Event](#) (02-05-2011)

[Secretary Clinton's Remarks at Munich Security Conference](#) (02-05-2011)

[Fact Sheet: Role of Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers](#) (02-05-2011)

[Fact Sheet: Implementation Timeline for New START Requirements](#) (02-05-2011)

5. United States, China Partner to Fight Nuclear Threats (02-08-2011)

By Sadie May Davis
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States and China pledged to cooperate on combating nuclear proliferation and enhancing nuclear security during Chinese President Hu Jintao's recent visit to Washington.

The two nations announced plans January 19 to establish a [Center of Excellence on Nuclear Security](#) in China. According to the Department of Energy (DOE), the arrangement allows the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and the Department of Defense to work with the China Atomic Energy Authority. This collaboration facilitates exchange of information and best practices, creation of training courses and technical collaboration to improve nuclear security throughout Asia.

"This agreement reflects the commitment of the two governments to strengthen their cooperation in nuclear nonproliferation, nuclear security and in combating nuclear terrorism, and represents a major step forward in implementing the global nuclear security outlined by our two presidents at the Nuclear Security Summit last April," said U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu, who signed the memorandum.

A separate agreement calls for [countering nuclear smuggling](#) through the establishment of a center in China to provide training in radiation detection. The facility, to be built in Qinhuangdao, will be the first of its kind in the region.

Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman signed that agreement in a ceremony at DOE headquarters January 19. He said the agreement demonstrates the nations' shared commitment to ensuring global peace and security.

The United States and China have cooperated for years to prevent dangerous materials from being transported illegally. A 2005 agreement between the two nations to combat nuclear and radiological smuggling in China focused on equipping the Yangshan Deepwater Port in Shanghai with radiation-detection equipment.

The 2005 agreement and the new training center are part of NNSA's Second Line of Defense (SLD) program. According to an NNSA fact sheet, the program helps strengthen capabilities of partner

nations to “deter, detect and interdict illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials across international borders and through the global maritime shipping system.”

NNSA has installed radiation-detection equipment at nearly 400 sites around the world. Recent work includes projects in China, Bulgaria, Cameroon, South Korea and Vietnam.

EXTENDING NUCLEAR SECURITY AROUND THE GLOBE

The SLD program has two components: the Core Program and the Megaports Initiative.

The SLD Core Program installs radiation-detection equipment at borders, airports and strategic feeder ports. Program representatives offer tools and training as well as maintenance of existing equipment.

Initially, program leaders focused on securing areas potentially vulnerable to nuclear smuggling in Russia. However, under the direction of Congress, the program extended agreements to other countries in 2002.

In 2003, NNSA offered an additional method to secure the world against nuclear smuggling. Working primarily with foreign customs and port authorities, the Megaports Initiative helps detect radioactive materials in maritime shipping containers.

The Megaports Initiative complements the Container Security Initiative (CSI) operated by U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Through CSI, specially trained U.S. customs agents are deployed in major non-U.S. ports to identify U.S.-destined cargo containers that pose a potential risk. Those containers receive an inspection by local customs officials before departure.

Locations participating in these programs receive detection equipment and alarm systems in addition to technical training and support. By 2015, the Megaports Initiative hopes to equip 100 seaports and scan more than 50 percent of global maritime containerized shipping. Currently, there are over 50 operational Megaports in all regions of the world, with several more in stages of implementation.

U.S. efforts to create multilateral nuclear security measures involve foreign governments, nongovernmental organizations and private industry. These partnerships are designed to benefit participating countries through exchanges of information and equipment and to serve as a deterrent to terrorists.

PROMOTING NUCLEAR LEADERSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY

The United States promotes a safer future for the world by safeguarding dangerous materials. President Obama, [speaking in 2009 in the Czech Republic](#), identified nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists as the “most immediate and extreme threat to global security.”

His call to secure all vulnerable nuclear material worldwide within four years was endorsed at the [2010 Nuclear Security Summit](#) in Washington by leaders from around the globe, who recognize the threat of nuclear terrorism and the need to cooperate.

[Obama told summit attendees](#) it had become clear that the world does not “need lots of new institutions and layers of bureaucracy.”

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Instead, the international community needs to “strengthen the institutions and partnerships that we already have and make them more effective,” he said.

The next Nuclear Security Summit will be held in Seoul, South Korea, in 2012.
